

# ADVENT

## ADVENT: MATTHEW 1:18-25

### Community Group Study Guide - Week of December 6, 2020

In Matthew 1:18-25, the author is writing to a primarily Jewish audience and he pays special attention to connect the events surrounding Jesus' birth to the ancient messianic prophecies that his audience was familiar with. Jesus' birth is remarkable both in its fulfillment of these prophecies, but also in His miraculous conception. Jesus was born of a virgin, and conceived by the Holy Spirit. This was proof that Jesus truly was the Messiah, Immanuel, God incarnated.

Being fully human and fully divine meant Jesus was the only person who could truly stand in our place to atone for our sins. He alone could offer the perfect sacrifice that was fully sufficient to pay the penalty for our sins. As we read Matthew's account we should marvel at Jesus' identity, and the great humility and love that led Jesus Christ to take on flesh and be born to die. We may also marvel at the incredible righteousness and faith of his young parents, Mary and Joseph.

Matthew also highlights the naming of Jesus. He would be called Immanuel (which means, God with us), and would be given the name Jesus (which mean the LORD "YHWH" Saves). These were not merely names, these represented Jesus identity and mission. He was God in the flesh who had come to save His people from their sins. Pastor Shane reminded us that as a result of Christ's obedience, God the father bestowed on Him a greater name. God the Father exalted God the Son and gave Him the "name that is above every name." Jesus' faithfulness caused him to endure shame and rejection throughout his life, which ended in his crucifixion, but God the Father raised him up, vindicated Him, and seated him in the place of honor at his right hand.

Jesus promises us in the book of Revelation that those who endure shame and suffering for the sake of His name will be raised up, vindicated, and given a new name as well (Rev 2:17, 3:12-13). Following Jesus may require us to endure great tribulation throughout this life. Paul taught us, however in Romans 8, that by faith we may "consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us." We have been called to persevere and to hold fast to Christ, knowing that by the Power of the Holy Spirit He is holding fast to us. He has justified us by His grace, He is sanctifying us by His Spirit, and He will one day glorify us when He Himself returns in Glory to judge the world with righteousness and make all things new.

## DISCUSSION GOALS

### Head

To understand that Jesus Christ was fully God and fully man, and therefore his sacrificial death was able to fully atone for our sins.

### Heart

To marvel at the love and humility shown by Christ at the incarnation, and to believe that if we humble ourselves like Christ, the Father will vindicate and exalt us like Christ as well.

### Hands

To strive to live by faith, and make decisions that show we are trusting God and his promises.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### In-Person Worship Services

THIS Sunday, December 13 at 9:30AM and 11:30AM.

Please go to <https://brookline.mosaicboston.com/serve> to sign up to serve on the Mini Mo or Usher Team.

We will hold a **Members Meeting this Sunday, December 13, at 3PM.**

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

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## Read Matthew 1:18-25

1. What initially stands out to you as you reflect on the text and the sermon? Did you find anything particularly challenging, convicting, comforting, or encouraging?
2. What do we learn from this passage about Jesus' identity and why are these things important?
3. Why was it necessary for the savior to be both fully God and fully man (not one or the other or even half-and-half)?
4. Joseph's faith caused him shame and helped him endure that shame. Can you think of specific times when you felt shame for following Jesus? How did you find strength to endure?
5. Joseph's faith also led him to take on some weighty responsibilities. Has your faith ever caused you to take reaps-ability for something that would have otherwise been easy to walk away from? What did you learn through that experience?
6. Joseph's faith also gave him the great blessing of spending time face to face with Jesus. How have you experienced God's blessing even in the midst of experiencing hardship or trials as a result of your faith?
7. Joseph and Mary bore shame as a result of their Faith. Jesus Christ bore shame as a result of his faithfulness as well. As a result, however, God exalted him and gave him the "name above all names." Scripture tells us that Jesus will vindicate us and give us a new name as well. **Read Revelation 2:17 and 3:12-13.** What is the significance of this passage. Why should something as simple as a name be a source of encouragement for us?
8. The first Christmas was full of unusual and unexpected events, and this Christmas season may feel very unusual as well. How have you been experiencing Advent differently this year? What have you been learning about Christ and what it means to follow him?
9. Does anyone have any other thoughts, comments, or questions about the sermon or text that they would like to share before we close?